

## Overcoming the Enemy Nehemiah 2

### Introduction:

1. I've done funerals for people and someone at the funeral will say about the person who died, "He didn't have an enemy in the world."
2. I understand what they mean by this, but we must understand this morning that we **all** have an enemy. Our enemy is not our boss, co-worker, neighbor, peer at school, ex-husband, or ex-wife.
3. **1 Peter 5:8** is very clear who our enemy is - it is the devil. The devil is a real, spirit being that once served God, but fell due to his own pride and rebellion. A great number of the angelic host followed him in his rebellion and constitute his wicked army.
  - The devil is said to be a thief, a robber, a murderer, but can appear as an angel of light. He is a tricky enemy. He desires to destroy this church, your marriage, your life, and your children's lives. He is a destroyer.
4. Here in our text, Nehemiah had traveled to Jerusalem to lead a group of people to restore and rebuild the gates and walls of Jerusalem. They desired for Jerusalem to once again be a source of praise and glory to God.
5. But Nehemiah soon found out that he had an enemy. vs. 10
  - These were non-Jewish men who were full of hatred towards Israel. These men were filled with the spirit of Satan and sought to prevent Nehemiah from accomplishing God's work in Jerusalem.
6. From this text we can gain some valuable insight into how we can overcome our enemy, Satan.

### If we are to overcome Satan, we must understand his tactics.

- You cannot possibly overcome an enemy if:
  1. You don't know you have an enemy.
  2. You don't know how that enemy will strike.
- Notice what Paul said in **2 Corinthians 2:11**: *"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."*
- Satan gets the upper hand in our lives when we are ignorant of his tactics. How can we become aware of Satan's tactics? God has revealed it in His Word.
- There are three key tactics that Satan uses and they are all seen here in Nehemiah's enemies.

### First, Satan holds people in bondage.

- The children of Israel were in bondage to their own circumstances. Jerusalem was a rubbish heap and they felt helpless to do anything about it.
- These men in verse 10 loved it. When they heard that somebody had come to deliver these people from their bondage, it grieved them exceedingly.
- Did you know that Satan is the author of bondage? **Luke 13:11, 16**
- Satan wants to ensnare people and take them captive. **2 Timothy 2:26**
- People all over Daytona are in bondage today. They are in bondage due to a love for money, due to an addiction, due to mental strongholds, due to painful memories, due to having no spiritual life, etc.

- What is the answer to this tactic of Satan? The answer is to turn in faith to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the great liberator. **John 8:36; Galatians 5:1**
- Remember, when you see thousands of people coming to our property next weekend, these are real people with real struggles. Some of them are under a load, and feel there is no way out.
- Our job is to give them hope and to tell them that the answer is Jesus Christ.

### **Second, Satan seeks to defeat through discouragement.**

- One of Satan's greatest weapons is discouragement. Nehemiah brought these people hope, and immediately Satan sought to discourage these people. vs. 18-19
- Satan loves to lead people into bondage and then fill their minds with feelings of hopelessness and helplessness.
- Let me warn you, church: you can expect Satan to try to bring discouragement into your life the next two weekends as you serve in WTB. Be aware of the tactics of the enemy.
- Satan may use one of our guests, a co-laborer for Christ, a leader here at the church, a family member, etc.
- Satan specializes in using discouragement to bring a sense of condemnation into your life. **1 Timothy 3:6-7** talks about falling into the snare and condemnation of the devil.
- He is a condemner and an accuser and he will seek to discourage you in your Christian life and service. Be prepared, be ready, and be aware of his tactics.
- What is the answer to this tactic of Satan? The answer is to stand strong in the power of Jesus Christ. This is exactly what Nehemiah did (vs. 20) and it is what we must do. **Ephesians 6:10-13**

### **Third, Satan desires to hinder God's work through deception.**

- Nehemiah's enemies inferred in verse 19 that in rebuilding Jerusalem, they were rebelling against the king, which would mean severe punishment.
- Was this true or false? It was blatantly false. The king not only gave Nehemiah permission, but he foot the bill for the project. But the enemy wanted the people to believe this lie.
- Satan is out to hinder God's work from moving forward. **1 Thessalonians 2:18**
- He does this by seeking to control people's minds through lies. **John 8:44**
- Satan will attempt to tell you lie after lie in an effort to hinder you from serving in WTB (give examples), or any other ministry.
- Satan desires to keep people in darkness by feeding their minds with lies. **2 Corinthians 4:4**
- What is the answer to this tactic of Satan? The only way to overcome a lie is with the truth. Nehemiah rebukes these guys in verse 20 with the truth.
- Here was the truth: They had every right to rebuild their capital city, and Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem are the ones that had no right to any part of the city.
- **John 8:32** proclaims, *"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*
- What is truth? Jesus said that God's Word is truth. **John 17:17**

- How do you know when Satan is feeding you lies? You look into God's Word, and the Bible will reveal the truth and uncover the lie.
- As you stand on the truth of God's Word, the lie loses its power. Remember the temptations of Jesus in the wilderness. Satan would offer a lie, but Jesus always disarmed the lie with the truth of God's Word. He said, *"It is written."*

**In Conclusion:**

1. Church, we need to understand that we have an enemy. He is vicious and determined. He absolutely hates what we are about to do the next two weekends - give the gospel to thousands of people while encouraging scores of believers.
2. Satan wants desperately to hinder this ministry, just as he did in Nehemiah's day.
3. We need to be aware of his tactics, but then also utilize the weapons that God has given to us.
4. I'm so thankful that I am on Jesus' side. We are more than conquerors through Him.
  - *"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."* **1 John 3:8**
  - *"Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ..."*  
**2 Corinthians 2:14**